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Press Release

**Professor Theodor W. Hänsch has been elected as a new member of the “Hall of Fame of German Research”**



In the past week, Professor Theodor W. Hänsch, Director at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics and Head of the Laser Spectroscopy Division, has been elected as a new member of the so-called “Hall of Fame of German Research”. Also Professor Joachim Milberg, founding president of the “Deutsche Akademie der Technikwissenschaften (Acatech)” and chairman of the supervisory board of BMW, has been presented with this award. The virtual “Hall of Fame” was founded in 2009 by the editors of the German *Manager Magazin*, in order to improve the image of science and technology in Germany. New members are elected in a two-step-procedure in which both academic

quality and economic value of the research have equal weight. The award is given each year to renowned researchers whose contributions have strengthened Germany’s research as well as its economy.

Professor Hänsch was born in Heidelberg in 1941. He studied physics at the University of Heidelberg, earning his doctorate in 1969. He went on to post-doctoral study in the United States, and was a professor of physics at Stanford University from 1975 to 1986. Since 1986 Professor Hänsch has been Director at the MPQ and Professor of Experimental Physics at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. Since 2006, he holds a chair endowed by the Carl Friedrich von Siemens Foundation.

His main research fields are the high-precision laser spectroscopy of hydrogen and similar elements and the investigation of ultracold quantum gases. His work in laser physics and quantum optics has especially influenced the field of cold atoms by the method of laser cooling and enabled precision measurements of atomic parameters. The Nobel Prize in Physics 2005 was awarded to him for the development of the frequency comb technique which greatly improved the precision of atomic clocks and set the basis for new experiments in metrology.

Professor Hänsch has received many scientific prizes and awards. Among others he was awarded the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft in 1988. In 2006 the *Große Bundesverdienstkreuz mit Stern* (Great Cross of Merit with Star) of the Federal Republic of Germany was conferred upon him. In June 2008 he became member of the ‘Order Pour le mérite’ which was established by the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV in 1842.

Including Prof. Hänsch, ten scientists have been by now elected as members of the “Hall of Fame of German Research”, among those are Professor Manfred Eigen, Nobel prize winner in Chemistry in 1964, Professor Peter Grünberg, Nobel prize winner in Physics in 2007, and Professor Harald zur Hausen, Nobel prize winner in Medicine in 2007. *Olivia Meyer-Streng*

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